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Washington, D.C. — Today, the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 290, the War Memorial Protection Act, legislation introduced by Rep. Duncan Hunter, a member of the House Armed Services Committee and veteran of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The War Memorial Protection Act—which allows for the inclusion of religious symbols on war memorials—was introduced by Hunter in response to a ruling by the Ninth Circuit, declaring San Diego’s Mt. Soledad Veterans Memorial unconstitutional.

“Across the country and beyond our shores, America’s military and veterans are proudly represented by war memorials that also display symbols of personal faith and religion,” said Hunter. “In many cases, these memorials represent not just individuals, but the shared commitment and sacrifice of those who serve, and those who never made it home.

“The Mt. Soledad Veterans Memorial is still under attack, for its cross, and it’s a sure bet these attacks won’t stop with Mt. Soledad.

“In the face of legal challenges against Mt. Soledad and the likelihood of more to come, it’s important that Congress install the right protection for war memorials in federal law, allowing the spirit and tradition of honoring our nation’s military to continue.

“I’m grateful for the support of my colleagues and I look forward to working with the Senate to send this bill to the President’s desk.”

For the 131 national cemeteries under the purview of the Department of Veterans Affairs, 48 distinct emblems of belief are currently authorized, including symbols for Atheists, Buddhists, Christians, Hindus and Muslims.